

SPASTICS IN ULSTER

How do they cope with life of violence?

Thousands cheered



When Pope knelt to Tracey

AS the Pope went down on his knees to talk to little Tracey Diddcott, 10,000 people clapped and cheered! 'It was,' said her mother, Mrs Jill Diddcott, an executive committee member of the Reading and Mid-Berkshire Spastics Group, 'an incredible experience.'

Yet it all happened by chance. 'We were visiting the Vatican and we knew that on Wednesdays the Pope held a public audience. When they saw Tracey in her wheelchair they took Tracey and me up to the front and the Pope saw us and asked us to come up. He doesn't come down among the people now because his health is poor and also for security reasons. When the Pope asked us to come up,

Our picture shows Tracey with the Pope and, in the background, her mother and the bodyguard who is handing over a commemorative medal.

his attendants carried Tracey forward. Fourteen Cardinals who each speak a different language were ranged round him, but he speaks perfect English and after I'd kissed his hand he said: 'I believe you're English.' I told him that we were and that we came

Cont from Page 2

WHAT is it like to be living on a war-footing when you're in a wheelchair? Spastics News went to Northern Ireland to find out. The answer where Ulster is concerned is simple and stark: 'Very, very dangerous.' As one spastic put it: 'There's no way I could survive a civil war, no way in the world.' He'd been held up and robbed by armed gunmen in his home, and needed special police and army protection on the house for three weeks after bricks were hurled through his window, and he was threatened with being burnt out.

Social workers are desperately looking for a new home for one mother since the Provos came round a staunchly Republican area in Belfast in the middle of the night. All the mothers were ordered to get their children up and to take their prams and dustbin lids to the nearby Army camp to demonstrate. The mother, whose child is heavily handicapped, flatly refused to comply. Since then all her neighbours, though they know how very disabled the child is, refuse to speak to her and she is living in fear. Another mother of a severely spastic child honestly admitted: 'I dreaded coming to live in a ghetto — especially a Protestant ghetto.'

The Balmoral Sheltered workshop based as it is on those pioneered by The Spastics Society could be any one of those in England—except for the anti-shatter tape on the windows. A bomb had exploded near-by, blasting in the windows and bringing down all the light-fittings. Had the workshop not been closed for holidays there would certainly have been casualties.

The school buses carry a large sign in the front now saying, 'Handicapped Children'—a driver said dryly: 'There have been two or three sticky moments. . . . On one occasion the children were turned out of a bus and it was set on fire and burnt. Other times they've had to lie flat to avoid snipers' bullets. Sometimes they just don't go to school—it is just too dangerous to get them out.' A recent example was the day Sinn Fein leader Moire Drumm was buried—the handicapped children in Ander-

sonstown had to stay at home that day.

A bomb incident in the summer when an Army Band was to give a performance at the Training Centre, meant that Army sharpshooters were positioned all over the roof and throughout the extensive grounds. At one time the centre, which can take 36 trainees, was down to seven because parents were too afraid to let the children travel. As it is, three of the current trainees are casualties of the Troubles, arms and legs lost by bombs.

One spastic girl training to be a secretary confessed: 'Of course I worry that I can't run and get out of trouble as quickly as others—it's a constant dread at the back of my mind. But I shall still go back to Londonderry to work—I wouldn't feel right anywhere else—it's my home, you see.'

A driver and attendant had to make an emergency dash to the Royal Victoria Hospital, Belfast, the other day with a handicapped child who'd had a fall at school—but a bomb in the city centre meant detours and what should have taken minutes turned into hours. Luckily, the child came to no harm.

Of the drivers, one father of

a spastic child said: 'They're the real heroes—they have to go from one ghetto to another. It's not so bad when they've got the children aboard, but when they've no passengers, things can get awkward.' This applies even more to the taxi drivers—now the Belfast Education and Library Board, the authority that runs the schools, endeavours to use taxi firms from the right area: One in the Falls Road to bring those children, a Shankhill Road firm to transport that area's children. It usually works—but not always—a fortnight ago a taxi driver was turned back with the words: 'You don't come in here any more,' and that was that.

But it is still an improvement on the past when the streets were littered with debris and broken glass—taxi firms

Cont on Page 12

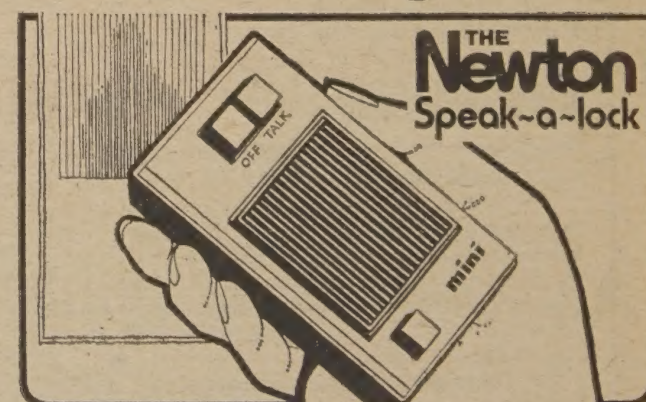


GIRVAN Hickson, aged four, steers confidently ahead in the nursery class car at Mitchell House School, Belfast. Inside, Spastics News looks at the road ahead for all the handicapped people in Northern Ireland. How are they coping among the bombs and bullets? Turn to Page 5 for the start of this issue's special in-depth report, with full picture coverage.

Sociable gift

WALTON Social Club, Surrey, has presented £600 to the White Lodge School for spastics at Chertsey. Members raised the money with a series of bingo sessions, sales and a sponsored snooker exhibition.

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Their Christmas wish... peace and love

IT IS just over seven years since Ulster went to war. In that time over 1,700 are known to have died and nearly 14,600 been maimed and wounded. Each week the toll of human life and misery rises. On the financial side the sum runs into millions, for compensation and for trying to maintain law and order.

But there is another side to Ulster's bloody face. Spastics Cards Ltd has received many orders from Northern Ireland for one particular Christmas card. The card is not especially grand, no reproduction of an Old Master ornamented with gold leaf. In fact it is quite a plain little card, and quite cheap . . . just 40p for eight.

On the front it bears three simple words: 'Peace and Love.'

Tracey met the Pope

Cont from Page 1

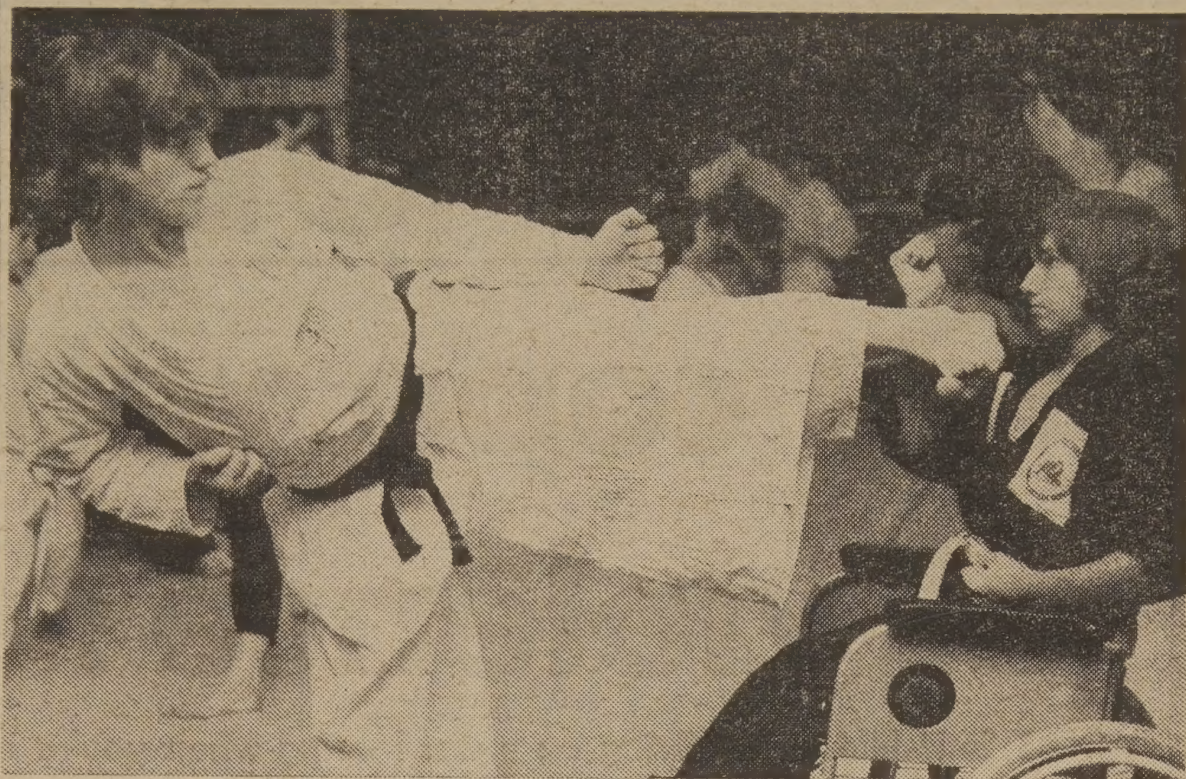
from "near the River Thames," and he smiled at that.

'It was then that the Pope went down on his knees to talk to Tracey. He must have chatted to her for about 10 minutes, asking her how old she was— "ten, but I'm nearly 11," she told him—and he asked her how she liked school, and whether she had brothers and sisters? Tracey told him she had a brother.

'All this time people were cheering and clapping and the noise was deafening. Eventually his body-guard helped the Pope to his feet—and I must say I was most surprised to see a gun in the guard's arm-pit! As we made our way back down the aisle everyone was shouting "Bambino" and reaching out to try and touch Tracey because the Pope blessed her.

'I could just see my husband at the back—only one person was allowed to accompany Tracey—and he stood out because he's 6ft 4in and I could see the tears streaming down his face. We all wept then, it had been such a tremendous emotional experience. We're not devout church-goers or anything and some people save all their lives so that they can go to see the Pope and as chance would have it, it was our lucky day.'

Best to keep on the right side of Derek



DEREK Cowell, 17, has passed the first grade to qualify for a white belt with the Tegatani Kempo Ju-Jitsu group of Blackburn. Derek, who is spastic, takes part in the club's many demonstrations, showing that it is possible to practise the art of self-defence from a wheelchair.

His father, Mr Ken Cowell, says that the exercise has done a great deal to improve Derek's co-ordination and he has made friends.

Derek is pictured warding off an attack by Mr Raymond Parker.

Picture by courtesy of Lancashire Evening Telegraph, Blackburn.

Charity aid in memory of his son

DAVID Kossoff originally dedicated a year of his services as an entertainer free of charge, as a way of showing gratitude for the fact that his son, Paul, had recovered from drug addiction. Tragically the year is now a memorial to Paul, who collapsed and died soon after his father started the project.

Yeovil and District Spastics Welfare Society joining forces with the local Focus Club have benefited from the Star's generosity. David Kossoff performed at a charity concert on their behalf on November 30.

Whatever the currency—it's welcome

LUTON Airport, the terminus for many package tour operators, has a charity box in the arrivals lounge where returning holidaymakers can deposit their surplus foreign currency. When it was opened recently, staff found an envelope containing 20,000 lire (more than £13) addressed to 'The English Spastics Fund.'

Two events...

A **BARGAINS** bazaar lived up to its name when it raised £205 for the Spastics Day Centre in Oldham. It was held by Mr and Mrs H. T. Dodd, of Dobeross.

...well named

A **NORWICH** Saturday Spectacular was a spectacular success—it made £1,000 for The Spastics Society and Leukaemia Research.

Help your children grow up to independence

New leaflet for parents

A NEW leaflet for the parents of handicapped children entitled 'Growing Up and Growing Away,' has been produced by The Spastics Society, and is available free.

It covers the difficult period of 'growing up' when a handicapped child turns from being a dependent part of his parents' life to a prickly, often contrary individual with special problems.

Sensible advice is given to parents who have a child attending a day school for the first time. It is suggested that once it is realised that

the child has settled down happily, full advantage should be taken of the spare time to enjoy life a little.

If the handicapped child has been assessed as suitable for boarding school, ways and means of getting him comfortably adjusted to the idea of going away are discussed—talking about the school a lot, for instance, taking him shopping for new clothes, giving him a special present 'not to be unwrapped until Mum and Dad have gone

home.' The importance of writing him long, newsy letters, visiting the school, or telephoning him is stressed.

It is pointed out that although the child is handicapped he will still be interested in sex and all questions should be answered.

Advice on how to cope with a handicapped child's ambition for the future is also discussed. The leaflet says that it is kinder to suggest fairly early on that there will be limitations to the types of job available to avoid

bitter disappointments

'Make sure that you are loosening the apron strings steadily as your handicapped child develops,' says the leaflet, 'Though you may not realise it he will want his independence as much as anyone else.'

Single leaflets are available from the Information Department, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Bulk supplies from Mrs Joyce Knowles, Castle Priory College, Wallingford, Berks.

Other leaflets available in the series are:—Your Child is Spastic; The Handicapped Child Within the Family.

HUMAN HORIZONS SERIES

This is a major new series of books that aims to make widely available the work now being done in opening up new possibilities for the handicapped and deprived. The first four books in the series are described here, and will be followed by future books written by many of the world's leading authorities in the field.

LET ME SPEAK

Dorothy M Jeffree & Roy McConkey

The learning games of this book represent one of the most exciting modern advances in the teaching of the handicapped. A complete programme for parents and teachers of any children who are slow in acquiring language, it shows how to assess a child's stage of language development and how to teach the skills necessary to reach the next stage. The authors are both Research Fellows at the Hester Adrian Research Centre, University of Manchester.

Hardcover £3.50 Paperback £1.75

KITH AND KIDS

Self-help for the Families of the Handicapped Maurice & Doreen Collins

The story of how one family fought for the best for their handicapped child, and how with several other families they set up *Kith and Kids*, which met on Sundays to puncture the loneliness that afflicted all of them, and grew into a structured programme of activity and training for the children, and of informed support for their families.

A source of guidance and inspiration to all "handicapped families," this book contains much practical information.

Hardcover £4.00 Paperback £2.50

LIVES WORTH LIVING

The Right of ALL the Handicapped Elizabeth & Michael Marais

In this intensely human and at times angry book the authors review the whole field of opportunities offered the mentally handicapped, and argue that no human being, however handicapped, should be given up as "hopeless". They write about what mental handicap is, about our social attitudes towards handicap, and above all, what is being done and what might be done to expand the educational, work and social opportunities for the handicapped.

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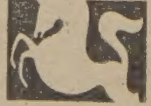
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They must tell us about benefits

I AM writing to you concerning the article in November's *Spastics News* on disabled people losing unclaimed benefits. I am disabled myself and did not know what I was entitled to. It was only by chance that I read about these allowances in the newspaper.

The ideal way for the disabled to learn what they are entitled to would be for the social security people, who have the names on record, to write and advise them to claim when new allowances come into force. All this I realise would be a big job as there are so many disabled people

about, so I suggest that all disabled people should read newspapers very carefully and listen to news bulletins and when new benefits are mentioned to get in touch right away with social security and find out what they are entitled to.

I do not know if this letter can be published in your paper for the benefit of others, but I do hope so. Good luck to everyone.

Miss M. V. Oxford,
Ambleside Drive,
Southend-on-Sea,
Essex.

I'll never forget John's kindness

I LIKED the way Liz Cook wrote the story about John Bonser in *Spastics News* and I should like to tell you another story on the same lines about him and his kindness to me. First I will tell you a little about myself. I live in an old people's home, have been here 17 years, my age is 58. I'm slightly spastic, and had little or no schooling, so my spelling is not up to much because I've taught myself as much as I could.

In my first year here I met and married a resident — he only lived two years, so a little while after the Matron of the home got me my first holiday from here by sending me to Bryn Mor in Caernar-

had a heart of gold as nothing was too much trouble to him.

I knew some of his life story but it made me think when I read the rest of it. I am very glad for his sake he has a nice flat of his own and the best of luck to him.

Winifred Dicksbury,
Loudon House,
Ridgway Road,
Ashby-de-la-Zouch,
Leicester.

'Doing my own thing'

I AM a great reader of the *Spastics News*, and it did my heart good to hear about John Bonser, wrongly condemned for 30 years in an institution, who now has a flat of his own. I would like to wish him the best of luck.

I have been in these homes myself since 1939 and I am now 46 years old and spastic, but not too bad. I would give my right hand to live on my own in a flat. There would be people saying 'she could not do it,' but it's not been proved, yet. As Mr Bonser said, 'his home is his castle,' and it must be wonderful for him to have his freedom after all those years.

I hear people are waiting to go into homes, and here I am wanting to try to do my own thing!

Miss Lucy Flynn,
Tan-y-Bryn Home,
St George Road,
Abergele, Clwyd.

Sacrifice is rewarded

HAVING read the letter of the 'Angry Mother' in your November issue, I feel compelled to write. Had my own mother shared these views when confronted with a heavily physically handicapped spastic daughter and had not struggled to train me in my own home environment, to prepare me to hold my own in a normal infants' school, I should not be the independent person I am today. I hold down a full time job, drive myself to work, run my own home, am an active member of my church, a helper at the local branch of the Gateway Club for mentally handicapped children, and have a wide circle of friends, both handicapped and otherwise.

I would like to assure this mother that any sacrifice she might have to make now will have its own reward in the future.

Joyce Bullock,
Apley Road,
Reigate.

Whose side is she on?

WITH reference to the letters published in your October edition of the *Spastics News*, I wonder if I might make the following comments:

Rosalind Osborne's remarks about the DDA are quite outrageous and rather insulting to the many of our members who are spastics... and who have given of their time and effort in formulating the policies of the DDA over the last three decades, and to suggest that we are 'ever-vociferous' greedy, et cetera, makes me wonder whose side she is on. I can only assume that she has neither read Baroness Sharp's report on the Mobility for the Disabled nor the subsequent comments that lady has made in the Press about the shoddy way the disabled have been treated in this matter. I can assure Rosalind that it is not our fault that the Government of the day blatantly ignores our reasoning, perhaps she would like to join us in our next mass lobby of Parliament to see this obtuseness at first hand.

Regarding the trike (I've driven them for 21 years), it is surely typical of the times we live in that when our political masters cannot find an honour-

Switching toys into fun aids for handicapped

COLLEGE lecturer Peter Toft wandered into a chain store one day and bought a simple electrical toy. He adapted its flimsy controls to a light but robust box switch and for the first time in his life a severely athetoid little boy had a toy he could actually play with. 'Since then I've been sold on the idea of adapting toys for handicapped children. I used to go round all the toy shops buying up suitable toys, but now I've found a sympathetic wholesaler.'

By buying at cost prices, Peter is able to adapt the toy's tiny switches to his specially devised switch box so that the price to a parent is no greater than buying it over the toy-shop counter.

Peter lectures in engineering at Woolwich College, South London, and his interest in working with the handicapped grew out of taking a party of students on a visit to a special education school. 'A teacher asked if there was any way I could produce a teaching machine for a handicapped child. This was in the days before Possum — the machine that gives the handicapped a lot of personal independence. The machine I made was successful and I went on to produce more than a dozen for London schools. Then my attention was drawn to this severely athetoid boy who'd never had a toy to play with, and I put a directional switch with a time delay on it for him and by then I was sold on the idea.'

Each Tuesday evening from 7 pm to 9 pm Peter holds a special engineering group at the college for parents and interested helpers to make equipment for the handicapped. The Woolwich branch of the Rotary Club helps by financing

the project and the Federation Combined Occupation Centre run by the London Borough of Greenwich make the switches. 'This way handicapped adults are able to help handicapped children, it provides them with a great sense of job satisfaction,' said Peter.

Mrs Mavis Reynolds, of the Greenwich Toy Library, was the first person to actually identify the need for the 6in square easy-to-operate switch for battery-operated toys and is also a member of Mr Toft's evening engineering class.

The toys are adapted to order and have been seen on the ITV 'Link' programme for the disabled. They range from a Boeing 747 with lighted engines and engine sound which travels in circles, to a Concorde, robots with flashing eyes and swinging arms, to Tom

and Jerry and Noddy cars. The cost varies from £4 to £7 and includes postage and packing.

To date the work centre has completed almost 100 orders that have literally come from the length and breadth of the country. 'Unfortunately, the wholesaler has now cleared his stock and we are waiting for the New Year when he restocks. We will either continue to produce these toys or adapt new ones if he enlarges his range,' Peter explained.

Further details can be obtained from the Federation Occupation Centre, Federation Road, Abbey Wood, London SE2.

Other toys available include the Marx assault tank which is also adapted by replacing the small hand-held switch with the box unit. This costs £11 plus postage from the Ashley Day Centre, Parry Place, Woolwich SE18. It is available to order but not before Christmas. The Raleigh 'mini trike' has been adapted so it can be propelled by moving the handlebars backwards and forwards and has a tray for the feet. It costs £15 plus postage from Tunnel Avenue Industrial Training Centre, Tunnel Avenue, Greenwich, SE10, and there are six in stock.



PETER Toft's toys get a test-run from one of the experts who finds Peter's box-switch just the job to get action from a battery-powered tug.

LETTERS

vonshire, Wales, for two weeks. When I arrived with my escort, who was due to go back to Leicester the next day, John was there. He had come with a group in their own bus, but had only one week's holiday. He saw I was on my own so came and spoke to me. We soon became good friends and with the group, too. When the bus driver took them out on trips around Wales John would ask if I could go along too. I had many a treat like that which I've never forgotten. There was a shop a few yards from Bryn Mor and I wanted to get some gifts. John went with me and carried them back. He helped me, and others who were there, a lot. I thought he

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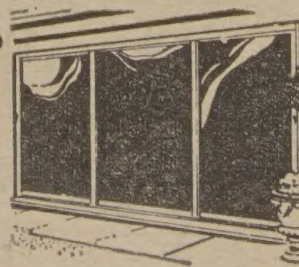
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Director's plea for 'new deal'

A 'NEW deal' for the mentally handicapped was called for yesterday by Mr James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society in a submission of evidence to the Jay Committee of Enquiry into Mental Handicap and Care, on November 16.

He suggests that a National Consumer Advisory Committee on mental handicap be set up and that mental handicap should become the responsibility of the Minister for the Disabled.

'Approximately 50 per cent of the people in mental handicap hospitals do not require nursing or nursing skills,' says Mr Loring. 'And there is an urgent need, despite the economic situation, to plan ahead on the assumption that in due course programmes of community care by local authorities will be revived.'

'Even now, thousands of children remain in long stay hospitals, children who could be more suitably accommodated elsewhere and who in another environment would have a chance to live normal lives.'

Adequate attention was not being paid to prevention. Far more resources should be made available for this. 'It is generally accepted,' says Mr Loring, 'that if all available knowledge was fully applied 50 to 60 per cent of all cases of cerebral palsy could be prevented.'

Early bird snaps up bargains



'Carried away' at new Spastics Shop

ACTRESS Nerys Hughes got more than she bargained for when she 'sneaked a way' from rehearsals for her latest TV series recently. For the lovely 'Liver Bird' dashed down to Southend to open the latest Spastics Shop, named, aptly enough—Society, in London Road.

She had a couple of surprises. She spotted her uncle, Mr Tom Parry, in the crowd at the opening. They had not

met for some time, and Uncle Tom became one of Society's first customers when he bought Nerys a charming piece of China pottery.

But Nerys was busy doing her own shopping: 'I don't know I always get carried away in these shops—there is so much to see and buy,' she said. Her main problem was to get two chairs, a basket, lamp, a set of plates, a teapot and milk jug, plus a few lesser odds and ends back home to her London flat.

Between buying her bargains, Nerys had time to meet the Mayor and Mayoress of Southend, Councillor and Mrs Neville Moss, and the staff of Society. She was also introduced to Mr Ricky Gower, Essex Regional Manager for the Spastics Pool. Brochures and leaflets about the Pool will be displayed at strategic point of sale spots, in the new shop. The idea, it is hoped, will bring a few more recruits to the Pool family.

Nerys—a hard-working member of the Stars Organisation for Spastics and a member of the committee that runs Wakes Hall Spastics Centre—told Ricky that they all appreciated how much the Pool handed over to help them in their work for spastics.

Mr Eddie Chapleo, Principal at Wakes Hall, who has taken control of the Southend shop temporarily for The Spastics Society—it will be run on similar lines to the highly successful Wakes Hall shop in Colchester—said: 'We run our shops on a strictly business and competitive basis except that the profits go to the charity instead of shareholders.'

Meanwhile, in true Liver Bird style, Nerys Hughes had charmed a couple of men to help her cram her bargain buys into a railway carriage on her way back to London.

EDITH Davis, of SE London, would like a male pen friend, aged about 36, preferably living in the London area. Miss Davis, who is 34, is 5ft tall, with auburn hair and hazel eyes. She is spastic and cannot walk very far.

Are you losing out on mobility cash?

MR Alfred Morris, MP, the Minister for the Disabled, emphasised the need to make sure that the Government's new £5 a week Mobility Allowance goes to the families of every severely disabled child. Some children who were eligible were still not being claimed for.

Mr Morris, who was speaking at the NAIDEX Exhibition of aids for the disabled in Brighton in November, said: 'In two weeks' time, thousands of severely disabled children in the age group 11 to 14 will receive outdoor mobility help for the first time ever when they receive their first payment of Mobility Allowance.'

'Even now, however, there are still some severely disabled children for whom the allowance has not been claimed. So I appeal to anyone who knows of a family with a disabled child who might be eligible to make sure that the Mobility Allowance is drawn urgently to their attention.'

'While even one disabled child does not receive the benefit to which he or she is entitled, the intentions of the Government and of Parliament are frustrated. The message I want to get to those who are entitled to claim the new allowance is "Claim now and avoid losing money." Let us all try to ensure that the new allowance goes to every one of the disabled children who are entitled to it.'

The debt we owe to this man of vision



THE Spastics Society was founded nearly 25 years ago with a £5 note and the enthusiasm of four people determined to move mountains for the neglected cause of the cerebral palsied. One of the founders was Eric Hodgson—the early meetings were held in his home at Croydon—and he became the Society's first Honorary Secretary.

On October 20, after a long illness, Eric Hodgson died, mourned by everybody connected with the Society. We owe him a great debt.

One of the people who knew him best is Ian Dawson Shepherd, the Society's first Chairman, and a member of that quartet of founders whose vision and enterprise brought the problems of spastics to the nation's conscience. Mr Dawson Shepherd, a member of the Society's Executive Council, has written this tribute to Eric Hodgson:

ERIC Hodgson had all the characteristics of a Yorkshireman: determination, directness, dourness. He had the horse sense, the hard headedness, the wry humour... and the kind heart. The Spastics Society needed just these qualities in its leaders to survive in its early days.

He was a founder member of the Society but he had helped to found it long before it came into being in January 1952. Way back in 1948 when his daughter Susan was a pupil at St Margaret's School in Croydon, the first residential school for spastic children in the world, he was a founder member of the St Margaret's Parents' Association and became its Secretary. Soon he was in constant correspondence and on Christian

name terms with the secretaries and chairmen of the handful of other Parents' Groups that had been started with the encouragement of the British Council for the Welfare of Spastics. His friendliness was to prove vital.

The other Honorary Officers of the St Margaret's Parents' Group were Jean Garwood, Alex Moira and I. Eric, Alex and I each had a daughter at St Margaret's, so naturally our burning question was, 'What next?' when at 13 or 14 our daughters would have to leave. There was no follow on. No senior schools. No homes. No training centres. No workshops. And the British Council was not keen to start any. In their view the spastics problem was under control.

The break

For three years from 1949 onward we battled with the Council for a secondary school and then, getting nowhere, decided to break with them. Eric, knowing the break inevitable... goodness, how he rallied against the BCWS!... strengthened his relationship with the groups. By 1951 we had planned the break, planned a secondary school, planned a Society and based our strength on Eric's claim that the handful of groups would leave the BCWS and swing over with us. With a singular lack of modesty we called our minute splinter group the National Spastics Society.

Eric was elected Secretary. He was right, most of the groups swung over to us.

Forgot caution

Yorkshire caution was part of Eric's character, too. Yet he knew well when to throw caution out of the window. During most of the Society's early days that window was kept wide open. For at the founding meeting in January 1952 it became patently obvious that one secondary school was a nonsense objective. We needed to provide every type of help that spastic children and adults needed. On that day our job suddenly grew a hundred times its size. Eric did not quail. When I volunteered to raise £1,000,000 'to start with,' he laughed but accepted the impossibility. The Society had to take risks, big risks, ridiculous risks: it was the only way it could grow. We bought buildings on tick long before we had the money; we

ploughed our money back into more money raising schemes instead of spending it on spastic children; we took chances that could have slapped the Society straight into Carey Street time and again. Eric, a Chemical Engineer, sober servant of Croydon local authority, used to interminable discussion before approving the official expenditure of a £5 note, faced and shared the Society's risks coolly like a big time gambler.

He had heart-searching moments, of course. Sometimes he put his foot down hard. And once decided on a course of action he was immovable. Yet he was a democrat to his fingertips. Majority will was law... but he relied on swinging his minority into a majority. And he was a born committee man, knowing his constitution backward and his committee procedure all ways, often tying me in knots. He believed strongly, too, in the groups freedom from Headquarters interference... and the Society has much to thank him for in this. For the Groups could grow largely in their own ways and their own initiative and ideas were their strength.

His strength

Eric left the Society after six years as Secretary to the Executive Committee, as an Honorary Officer and as a tower of strength on numerous other committees. During those six years he had probably attended one if not two evening or week-end meetings a week, every week, every month, every year.

He left, typically, 'on a point of order.' He believed the Society was getting top heavy. Too many Chiefs, too few Indians. His leaving was a great pity. The Society was making about £1,000,000 a year and just clawing its way into a big expansion. It needed a growing staff. But it also needed Eric's horse sense. Nevertheless he left behind him a sound structure he had largely helped to build. And he left me with many lasting memories of a cheerful, lovable companion, a difficult, opinionated, courageous, loyal strong fighter who never gave up.

Twenty-five thousand spastic people can be glad he lived and was determined to help not only his own daughter Susan, but all others so handicapped.

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The hopeful face of Ulster



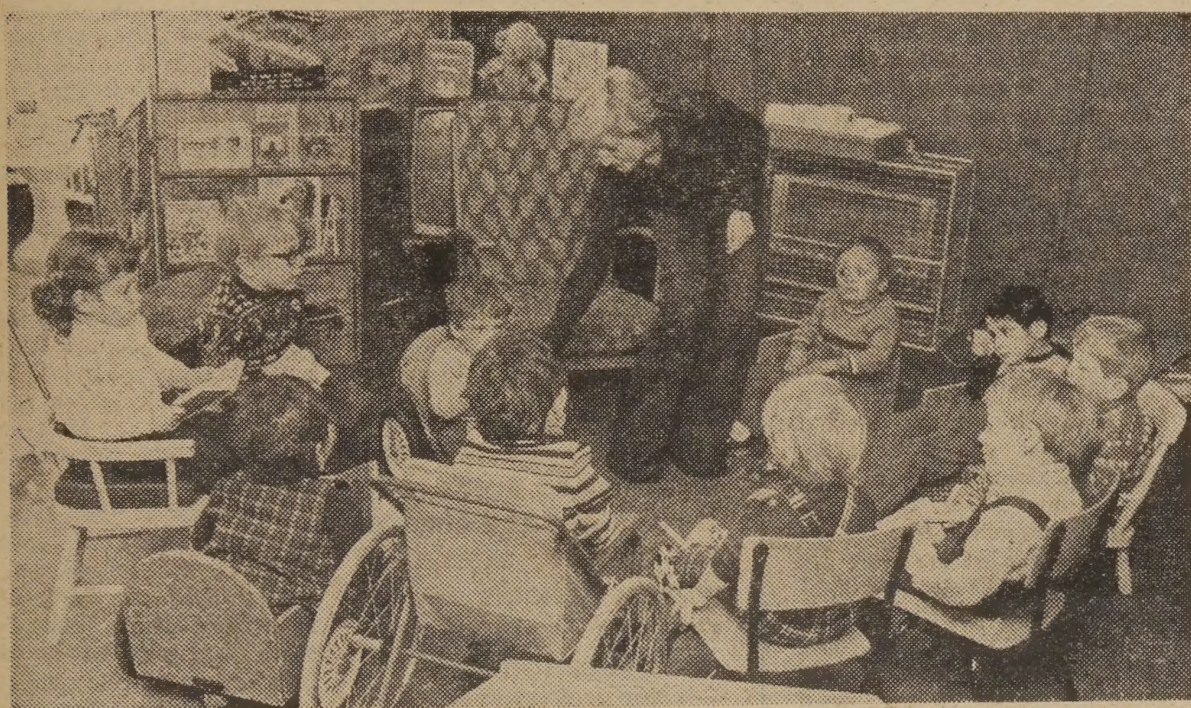
THE start of the school day for four-year-old Stephen Hanna, held by his father, the Rev Desmond Hanna, while mother Barbara and younger brother Niall wait to say goodbye.



THE end of the working day for Work Centre employees Rachel Eakin, Sally Davidson, Mary Greene and Rosanne Flannigan, pictured with Appeals Officer Andrew Park.



GEORGE McDowell, the only 'Peto' child in Northern Ireland, with his school's much-loved and occasionally obedient mascot Tara, and in the background one of the school buses.



IRMA Powell, a trained and qualified child-care worker, hands out milk to the nursery class above, and below hands over little Roberta Carmichael, aged three, into the care of bus driver Robert Milliken and escort Mrs Elizabeth Robertson. The latter has been doing the job for seven years and speaks warmly of all the parents she meets—whatever the district they visit.



MRS Heather Wylie, a qualified child care worker who has helped with the nursery class for nine years, with Sandra Moore, four.



MARTINA McCamphill, 17, has just started training at Parkanaur and hopes to return to her home in Londonderry to work as a secretary. 'I'm looking forward to getting a job and being independent.'



CO-OPERATION between the oldest and youngest in the class, soldier's daughter, Cheryl Rae, four, helps Paul McGuinness, aged nine, get to his feet.



MARY Greene and Dorothy Anderson with Balmoral Work Centre Manager Vicky Fraser. All three have been at the Centre since it started.

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Ulster has 'Flying Squad' of therapists



PADDY Baillie, the travelling advice clinic's senior physiotherapist, has nothing but praise for the way Peter Kelly, aged eight, is coming on. She sees him every two months at Craigavon Area Hospital. Peter was able-bodied until the age of five when he underwent an appendix operation and an undetected heart condition led to a cardiac arrest and left him spastic.

IN the bad old days, parents of handicapped children would be travelling anything over 100 miles each way to bring their children to the Advice Clinic in Belfast run by the Northern Ireland Council for Orthopaedic Development. By the time they got there the children would be too tired to do anything.

These days they're luckier—a 'Flying Squad' of therapists headed by Mrs Helen Mulligan, superintendent physiotherapist, provide a travelling advice clinic. As one of the physiotherapists, Heather McKee, put it: 'We've brought the mountain to Mahomet.'

The squad travels upwards of 5,000 miles a month assessing, advising and treating small children. Twice a month they go to Londonderry, 100 miles northwest of Belfast, twice a month to Craigavon, 30 miles south, and once to Omagh.

The mothers come by car, public transport or ambulance from their villages, and a journey of 40 miles is not unusual. The Advice Clinic held at Craigavon—a new town in the process of developing from neighbouring Lurgan and Portadown, is in the area hospital's physiotherapy department. One of NICOD's hopes for the future is to have separate buildings specifically for the clinics in the grounds of the hospitals and schools they now visit.

Being new, Craigavon Area

Hospital has all the advantages of space, light and colourful decoration to make the wait for an appointment more cheerful for the children.

Paddy Baillie, senior physiotherapist, is treating little Lisa Hanthorne, aged 4½, as a cerebral palsy case although her diagnosis reveals a chromosome abnormality so rare that only 11 have been recorded in the world.

Ironically her mother is a midwife. Said Mrs Violet Hanthorne: 'Abnormal babies—yes, I've delivered lots and lots of them.' At birth Lisa weighed 4lb 10z and at first her mother was told: 'She's tiny, but doing fine.' Twenty-four hours later came the shock announcement: 'She's likely to die before she's six months old.' Tests had indicated an abnormality.

'We thought if she's only going to live six months we'll take her home,' so once she'd reached 5lb, Lisa went home. Further tests seemed to indicate a genetic fault. That gave her a possible life-span of a year—the oldest recorded case of a child with Edward's syndrome was 11. Mrs Hanthorne eventually became pregnant again—the baby was born dead, apparently perfectly normal, nine weeks early. And there were to be more blows. Last winter Mrs Hanthorne, expecting another baby, underwent amniocentesis—a test of the fluid round the baby. The result was chilling. The baby Mrs Hanthorne was carrying was grossly abnormal and was delivered 24 hours later dead. The Hanthorne's were told they had a 1-3 risk of an abnormal baby.



MRS Hilary Getty is Mitchell House School's Chief Physiotherapist, coming first to the school for a year in 1963 and returning in 1967, and has been there ever since. Here she watches nine-year-old Donna Donnegan practise on the walking bars.



THE school bank, along with the school shop, draws enthusiastic prize, the bank's clients have cheque books and get acknowledged bank its hours are Monday and Thursday.

School helps the p as well as the c

MATTHEW GIBSON is tall, urbane and welcoming—the type of man any parent would wish to be the head of the school their child attended. So it is just as well that he's the Principal of Mitchell House School, Belfast, where the 60 pupils have just one thing in common—a physical disability so great that it rules out the chance of their attending normal schools—in the first years of formal education at least.

Their ages range from 2½ to 17, their disabilities from cerebral palsy and spina bifida to muscular dystrophy and less common handicaps. His empathy with his charges was summed up by one parent: 'You get the feeling he's never so happy as when he's loaded the kids up in the Land-Rover and taken them off for a week's camping.'

His study differs from that of many heads by having what at first appears to be an ordinary TV set, and is, in fact, just a monitor—for the thousands of pounds worth of video equipment there as well.

The Land-Rover and video equipment are all testimony to the generous and fund-raising skill of the Friends of Mitchell House Committee set up by the parents and outside organisations like the Round Table, Rotary, and Lions. Just a few weeks was all it took for the

£3,000 to come in for the Land-Rover, the only problem was whether it would bear too strong a resemblance to an Army patrol vehicle, and therefore risky.

In just one year the Friends have raised nearly £10,000. A plea for Green Shield Stamps in order to get an electric wheelchair for pupils to use in the Stoke Mandeville Games resulted in a deluge that was embarrassing. Thousands of the little sticky green squares along with at least three cheques for the full amount of the chair's cost came in.

Mr Gibson is keen to encourage parental involvement in the school, so any special skill can be utilised: so a child whose father is an electrician will be asked to help out on an electrical problem, and so on. But it goes deeper than that. Mr Gibson explains:

'A lot of parents come to see me because their child has been put down for the school, but they have no clear idea just what's the matter with their child. They've been told it's handicapped and their minds have just gone blank, they haven't taken in anything else. Often they're told in a rather clinical manner. So we've tackled the problem in a number of ways. We've set up a parents' support group. It gives a list of names and addresses of parents who can be contacted at any time because they've been through the shock already. We're sending a letter to doctors explaining this and asking them to pass the information on.'

'We also organise a small meeting between Mrs Helen Mulligan, the superintendent physiotherapist, the doctor, and me in a small room so that



MITCHELL House Principal Matthew Gibson with Stuart Colquhoun with the recently donated Land-Rover for outdoor pursuits. Early fears that the vehicle could be mistaken for an unfounded and there have been several successful camping trips.

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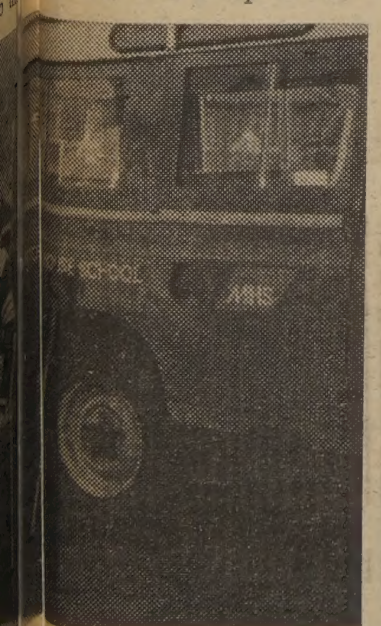
they can ask all the questions
they've been too overwhelmed
to ask before.

Robert McDowell is Chair-
man of the Mitchell House
Parents' Staff Association—his
five-year-old son George is one
of those who slipped through
the net of ante-natal care.

Emma McDowell, a strik-
ingly beautiful refugee from
the Hungarian Revolution and
whose sister is in the Hun-
garian State Ballet, knew that
her impending baby was at
risk because of the conflict of
rhesus positive and negative
factors in her blood and that
of her husband. Her preg-
nancy was monitored at a local
hospital but not at a hospital
which has a special unit geared
for the problem. So George
was born, induced too early,
and for a week fought for
breath. Oxygen starvation
made him a spastic.

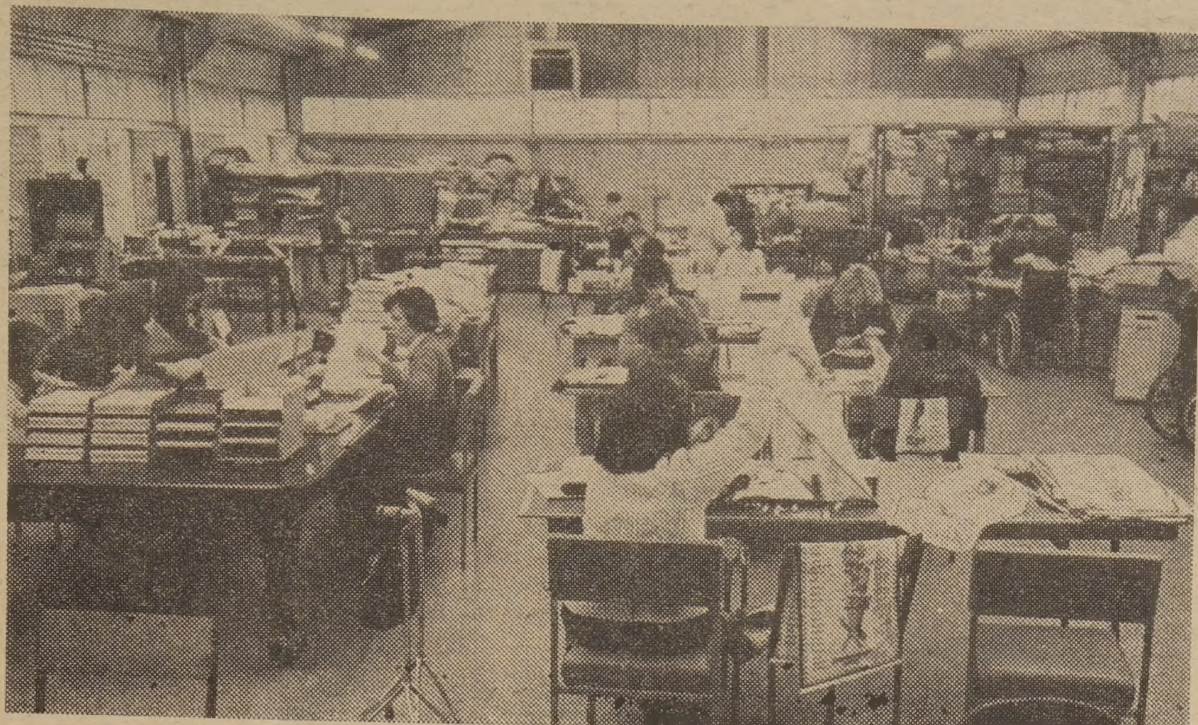
But being Hungarian she
knew of the Peto Institute in
Budapest where the treatment
for spastics has reached an
advanced level. So three times
in his short life George has
been sent to Budapest to spend six
months at the Institute, he's
learned to walk with his Peto
sticks and he's the only 'Peto'
child in Northern Ireland.

Barbara Hanna is one of the
parent representatives on the
school management committee.
She used to be a social worker
and she's married to a Church
of Ireland rector. Their first
son, Stephen, now 4½, is a
severely handicapped spastic.
Not surprisingly, Barbara's
name is on the list of coun-
sellors. Mr Gibson also has
a toy library each week in the
nursery class. It doubles in
encouraging the children to
coming to the class and gives
others the invaluable chance
to discuss their problems with
each other over a cup of tea.



Carson Quinn and Doris
canoeing being one of the
patrol have so far proved

It looks just like any other work centre...



BALMORAL Work Centre is a hive of profitable industry with its 40 workers and five instructors. A contract for a local linen firm exporting to America has taken on a seasonal flavour as the workers make up printed linen calendars for 1977. Hospital packing is a permanent contract and free wood from a local timber merchants is chopped and bundled for firewood. Volunteers from overseas also lend a helping hand.

But the glass is bomb proofed

VICKY Fraser has been with the Balmoral Work Centre since it opened almost a decade ago. 'I was a domiciliary occupational therapist and I met quite a few physically handicapped people in the Province, and of course there was nothing for them to do. Then a work centre, based on those run by The Spastics Society, was started privately, and I came as occupational therapist. It was a pilot scheme run in Malcolm Sinclair House, which is now the new hostel, before we opened here with a purpose built building

where we could get a pro-
duction line going.

It opened in 1970 and my
job has evolved into that of
manager. We have 40 workers
and five instructors and before
we were taken over by the
Department of Health and
Social Services we depended
totally on voluntary contribu-
tions. Now we get a 75 per
cent government grant.

'We do very similar work to
work centres in England,
assembly work and packing,
duplicating and so on. We
have a permanent contract with
a linen company which exports
goods to America. One differ-
ence though is the anti-shatter
tape on the windows. We had
a bomb go off in a garage

opposite, the windows blown in
and all the light fittings
brought down. If we hadn't
been closed for the holidays
we'd certainly have suffered
casualties — there was very
little warning.'

Despite these occupational
hazards the work goes on.
Mary Greene, who with
Dorothy Anderson has been at
the centre from the start, has
travelled each day from her
home in Lurgan, 20 miles
away. 'I've just passed my test
and got an invacar — before
that I used a tricycle to the bus
station and came that way. I'd
start at 7.40 am and not arrive
till 9.45 am — now I can do
the journey in just over an
hour.'

Gerry McCann - a man of peace in city of violence

GERRY McCANN is an easy-going, amiable sort
of a man with a touch of the stage Irish about
him in his humorous approach. No mean feat
for someone crippled at birth and whose life has
been threatened by gunmen since.

He is a remarkable man in many ways — not least in
that he loves his neighbours and he is the only Roman
Catholic in a 100 per cent Protestant area — 'Sure they're
all wonderful folk, just wonderful.'

Gerry is a survivor and
the first battle he survived
was his birth. 'There are
only two occasions when
I've wanted to turn my face
to the wall and weep.'

The first? 'Some years ago
a woman approached my
wheelchair — I was on my way
to work and really full of the
joys of spring — and told me
that she had lived next door
to us when I was a youngster.

'She went on to say: "Oh, I'll
never forget the day you were
born. Me Mammy came
rushing over to our house
crying — "the nurse has hurt
the poor wee baby." When
Sophie told me that I could
have howled — for the un-
necessariness of it all.

The other occasion was
when I was waiting for the
doorman to help me into work
and there was a furniture van
delivering goods. "Hold on a
minute" shouted one of the
men "and let the poor wee
cripple through."

Those are the only times I

could have cried. You see I
had one great advantage in
life — for the simple reason
my parents loved me and there
was a large enough family,
eight of us, to stop anyone
worrying unhealthily over me.
The outbreak of war was the
turning point for me. I'd never
gone to school because society
then didn't give a damn about
folk like me so I was 12 and
illiterate.

'People had tried but it
didn't get through to me.
Then I decided to teach myself
to read and by the time of the
first blitz six months later I
was fluent.

'Later my father died sud-
denly so I had to get a job —
it was an economic necessity.
But it meant I had to sell
myself. So I went down to the
remedial gym where I was
being treated and which an-
other disabled patient who
owned a factory, attended. I
didn't say a word — I just
exercised as hard as I could,
determined to shine at every-
thing and at the end of the

session he offered me a job
— at £4.'

Gerry knew there was no
future for him in the firm and
went on to open a shop, even-
tually owning a chain of five,
but he decided to cut back to
one and joined the Civil
Service. In the meantime he
had married — he'd inter-
viewed Mary for the job of
assistant in his shop but
turned her down because she
wanted too long for her lunch
hour. Two weeks later he
went cap in hand to ask her
to work for him and she
accepted.

'For the next two years
people were always making
comments as they will if there's
a bachelor and spinster to-
gether, like: "When'll you two
wed?" and this used to annoy
us — until we realised what
we meant to each other and
we got married. Now we've
two foster sons, Philip, 17,
who's just joined the Royal
Marines, Thomas, 15, who's
doing a catering course and
helping my wife run the shop
— I expect he'll end up
manager — and my Mandy.
She's Polynesian and we
adopted her when she was
seven months and now she's
11 and beautiful, she's the
light of my life.'

As Gerry's family grew so
did his ambition to succeed
within the Civil Service. Three
times he went before a board
for promotion, each time was
turned down and each time he
appealed. 'They were blinded
by the wheelchair you see —

Cont on Page 10

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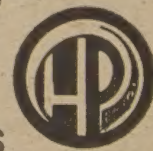
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SN Dec14



MARY and Gerald Eakins with the many gabled roof of Parkanaur behind them. The story of their son Stanley's achievements will appear in next month's issue.

How many centres give jobs to ex-trainees?

PARKANAUR is a splendid mansion, a fairy story of fable come true and the key to a new life for the handicapped youngsters of Ulster.

In the 1920s, Thomas Doran, aged 17, left his home in the tiny village of Castlecaulfield, in a new suit with 17 shillings in his pocket and a one-way ticket to America. With the money he got from his first job he bought a new suit in order to send the one he'd worn back home for a younger brother, and that was the last anyone heard of him for 33 years. In 1959 he came back a millionaire.

It was around that time that the Rev Gerald Eakins was looking for somewhere to start a training centre. His only child, Stanley, was the first spastic child from Northern Ireland to receive specialised education and that had been at Westerlea in Scotland.

Stanley embodied the problems facing all handicapped school leavers then—'where to now?' His father, then Minister of Castlecaulfield, by chance began talking to Thomas Doran. 'He was a fantastic fellow,' Mr Eakins recalled. 'I said I was interested in the house and he said:

"I'll buy it for you" — that was the kind of man he was.'

He gave Mr Eakins £12,000 and the mansion of Parkanaur, its 63 acres, outbuildings, market garden and gate lodge were purchased. Today the house alone is valued at £400,000.

The trainees come at 16 for an eight-week assessment, and can choose from a variety of training courses that last from



26 weeks to a year. Carpentry, gardening, clerical work, domestic duties and further education are just some of the subjects taught in the 19th century mansion with its vaulted ceilings, carved oak panneling and heavily wooded landscape.

Parkanaur also practices what it preaches: 'We have a 92 per cent success rate in placing our trainees so when a vacancy occurs on our staff we employ one of our graduate trainees. It's no good us expecting other organisations to employ them if we don't.'

All the staff with the exception of Mr Eakins and his wife, who is matron, and Mrs Violet Moody, relief matron, are all former trainees. Mr and Mrs Eakins have a flat within the building which — with the main cellar reinforce the feeling of a fairy tale. Mrs Eakins' hobby is collecting antiques, and the rooms of the flat reflect her success. The cellar has been a backdrop for photographs of pop groups for Mrs Eakins has created a museum beneath the arched ceiling. Spinning wheels, copper, brass and cast iron ware, samplers and photographs culled from throughout the province are represented, county by county. LEFT: Kenny Devlin, aged 20, came to Parkanaur four years ago as a trainee and is now the assistant gardener.

They can't knock on doors for donations

ANDREW Park is the Northern Ireland Council for Orthopaedic Development's Appeals Officer. 'I joined three years ago and feel 10 years older!'

Fund raising is complicated by the Troubles. 'For instance we can't do door-knock appeals of an evening! People don't like answering a knock on the door. But despite everything money still comes in. We had to call off a flag day two years ago because it fell on Bloody Friday — there were so many bombs going off in the city centre we had to call the collectors in after two hours because it was too dangerous.'

'But last year we got £5,000 from the Christmas seals sold in Primary Schools alone which was quite staggering — that's 500,000 pennies!'

'I can't imagine any other job that could be as rewarding. I'd been in insurance and I couldn't see myself doing that until I was 65.'



SPASTICS News reporter Liz Cook, pictured setting off on the school bus run in Belfast, wrote the stories about the handicapped in Ulster in this issue. She came back from Northern Ireland full of admiration for the volunteers, and the staffs of Centres for the handicapped, who achieve so much good in contrast to the violence and horror which, sadly, is the dominant feature of life in Ulster today.

The organisation that cares for handicapped

THE Northern Ireland Council for Orthopaedic Development was launched in 1940, but the Second World War dashed the original plan to build an Orthopaedic Hospital and so 11 clinics were set up throughout the Province. By 1948 3,000 patients were being seen.

The first hospital school was in the Malcolm Sinclair House, which was to change to a work centre and is now the hostel. It provided treatment and education for 28 children aged between

two and eight. Fleming Fulton School opened in 1957 for the eight to 16 age group where the Education Authority provided education and NICOD, therapy and treatment. The next step was the Parkanaur Training Centre for school leavers. Now the Belfast Education and Library Board has taken over both Fleming Fulton and Mitchell House and the DHSS has the responsibility of Parkanaur and Balmoral Work Centre.



ROBERT McDowell, chairman of the Mitchell House Parents Staff Association, with his son George at a Renault car rally, raising funds for the handicapped. Like many parents Robert feels a sense of isolation and despair at the problems besetting their children. The situation is not unlike that of parents with spastic children in this country before The Spastics Society was launched—one short answer could be the introduction of a regional social worker. There are eight Spastics Society regional social workers in England and Wales.

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Books will help parents and public

'HUMAN Horizons' is the title Souvenir Press has given to a new series of books just launched. The series is designed to explore and make more widely available knowledge of the work now being done in the field of the handicapped and the socially deprived.

The first four titles are **Keith and kids**, by Maurice and Doreen Collins, **Let me speak**, by Dorothy Jeffree and Dr Roy McConkey, **Lives worth living**, by Elizabeth and Michael Marais, and **To love is to be happy with**, by Barry Neil Kaufman.

'Keith and kids' is about self-help for families of the handicapped — it details how the Collins faced the problem set with the birth of their own handicapped daughter, Kim, and how they came in contact with other similar families and set about solving the day-to-day difficulties.

'Let me speak' is a complete teaching programme for both parents or those in the mothering role, for helping handicapped children acquire language. 'Lives worth living' — a right of all the handicapped — shows that no matter how great the handicap, all have something to give to society. The last in the new launch, 'To love is to be happy with', is written by the father of an autistic son.

Each book appears in both hard and paperback editions and cost between £4 and £1.75, and are obtainable from bookshops or from Souvenir Press Ltd, 43 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PA.

Prizes after all for trio

A WARM gesture from Mr Eric Baird, the Publisher of the Horse and Pony magazine, will bring great pleasure to three young riders who were joint winners of the Chase-McCharlie jumping event at the National Spastics Gymkhana held recently in the Royal Riding School, Buckingham Palace.

Although the three riders, Allan Bagshaw, of The Star Centre for Disabled Youth, Cheltenham; Peter Chadwick, of the Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge, Kent; and Timothy Richards, of Valence School, Westerham, Kent, equalised, there was a problem, for there was only one orange plaque to present. Mr Peter Felgate, the Riding Master, ruled that this should be presented to Allan as he was riding a horse he had never mounted before.

When Mr Baird heard of this, he immediately volunteered to send all three riders a special Horse and Pony Award of rosettes and medals. 'It's a pity that they don't all get a prize for doing so well,' was his comment.

So-interested Royal visitor...



sees new products for handicapped

THE Duchess of Kent is pictured with Mr Ray Hodgkinson, of Newton Aids Ltd, on the Newton stand at the Naidex '76 Exhibition at Brighton which she had just opened. As Patron of The Spastics Society, the Duchess is always keen to hear of any new developments to aid the handicapped, and this year Newton Aids had two new chairs on show.

The Queensway, pictured below, is a chair originated by Queen Mary College, London, which rotates on its own axis. It has a split level base to allow the user to adjust the height of the chair to suit the occasion, an easy to use joystick control and can also be taken apart without difficulty.



The Newton Polychair, like the Queensway, is an indoor chair and with this model you buy what you need when you need it. It is possible to start off on a modest, inexpensive basis and add later to the chair if you wish. It has a simple single base power unit for batteries, the seat can be either plastic covered or upholstered, and there is a choice of unit control. There is an inexpensive on/off microswitch control or a fully proportional control and the controls can be mounted to the left or right of the chair.

Link by post

POSTLINK is a service which started almost a year ago in the Cambridge area for linking mainly but not exclusively handicapped people according to interest, hobbies, etc, through regular correspondence.

Write to POSTLINK, 328 High Street, Cottenham, Cambs, enclosing a sae, and they will send you a form. Fill it in and POSTLINK will do the rest.

Leader Jim

THE Edinburgh Evening News and Odeon Charity Appeal Fund made £9,000 last year when more than 1,000 people took part in a sponsored walk. This year Jimmy Savile, OBE, led the way on the 15-mile hike on November 28, and they hope he'll fix it so that the sum raised this year will be even greater. Last year New Trinity Centre for Spastics got a cheque for £1,500.

Charitable stars will glitter in busy December

DECEMBER may be a cold dark month in the calendar but the Stars Organisation for Spastics always makes sure that there will be plenty of glittering events to make up for it.

This year the annual ball at the Grosvenor House is on December 6 and includes Dame Vera Lynn's by-now famous tombola which raises over £2,000 each year. It's followed by a carol concert at the Royal Festival Hall on Saturday, December 11, with Vera Lynn, The King's Singers, Libby Morris and readings by the stars of 'George and Mildred' the TV hit comedy series, Yootha Joyce and Brian Murphy. Helen Ryan, Sam's Set, the New Philharmonia Chorus and the choir of Desborough School, Maidenhead, are also taking part. Musical directors

are Geoff Love and Norrie Paramor.

The first night of the Olympia International Show Jumping Championships on Wednesday, December 15, are in aid of SOS and Harry Secombe will be one of the stars there.

There is a pop concert with Rod Stewart, Guys and Dolls, The Hollies and many others at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, on Sunday, December 19. The performance of the Palladium pantomime on Tuesday, December 21 ('Cinderella' starring Yootha Joyce, Brian Murphy, Richard O'Sullivan and Fiona Fullerton), will benefit the SOS. Tickets for the ball can be obtained from the SOS at Society headquarters and for the pop concert, ticket application forms are published in the Daily Mirror. Tickets for the other events can be obtained from the respective box offices.

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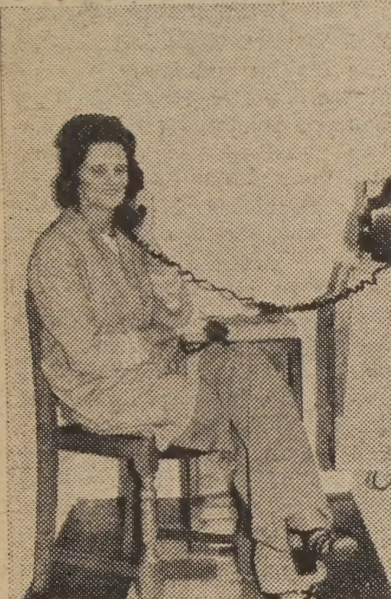
SN Dec24

WINDOW ON WALES

by Emlyn Davies

Imaginative gift buys privacy for residents

THE public telephone at the Mena House Hostel in Penarth, was in the hallway and as a result, the residents could not make calls in private. The newly-formed 'Friends' of the hostel agreed that if the empty space underneath the stairs could be converted into



a private telephone booth, they would bear the cost. The kiosk was duly built at a cost of £56 and I am sure the residents are extremely pleased that an imaginative gift has given them extra privacy. The picture shows the new kiosk.

READERS of this column will remember the story on Mr Ken Thomas, veteran fund-raiser of the Swansea group. Ken has recently had a major operation, but he is recovering, and I am sure that it will not be long before he is back in harness working for the group.

OUR local appeals officer, Wally Hains, attended the ladies' section of the Abercwmboi social club and although outnumbered at least 20 to 1, came away with a cheque for £100 which the ladies had raised for the Society. The cheque was presented to Wally by Mrs E. Lewis, chairman of the club.

MR and Mrs Dyer, of Ysgol Street, Swansea, recently moved back to Swansea from the north of England, and quickly realised that the 'Longfields' spastics centre at Swansea, which caters for the daily needs of 45 spastics, required financial help. They made a collection in the local club and institutes and raised £112. The nicest part of this story is that Mr and Mrs Dyer did this without any request from the local Society, so it was a truly voluntary effort.

MRS Mary Roberts, who is the manager of the Cardiff group's day care centre, is an expert in yoga and has raised many hundreds of pounds by organising classes at the centre. As a result, many of the mothers who have attended the classes and contributed to the fund-raising, have allowed, their children to have yoga lessons every Saturday. This involvement led Kate Butler, aged three, her sister, Samantha, aged nine, Clare Griffiths and Karen Brook, both aged 10, to organise two sales of work at which they raised £17.20.

THE riding team from the Society's Craig-y-Parc school in Wales did well at the National Spastics Gymkhana held at Buckingham Palace, and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Another Royal event came on November 26 at the Pontcanna Riding Stables under the auspices of the RDA, when the Craig-y-Parc team together with riders and helpers from all over South Wales met Princess Anne.

WHEN Colwyn Bay Spastics Society held its annual sherry evening it was not only an immense social success but also a financial one, with a total of nearly £70 raised from a tombola and competition.

Helping hand for new man

MOST people in Wales will know Mr Ernest Mort, BA, who has been secretary of the Pontypridd and District Spastics Society for the last 20 years. A former master at Pontypridd grammar school, he has given practically the whole of his free time to the running of the group, and his enthusiasm and wry humour will be missed. However, he is not lost to the Society altogether, as he had agreed to act as assistant hon. secretary for a time so that the new secretary, Mr T. Alun Jones, can more readily understand the complexities of running a local volunteer group.

A MYSTERIOUS telephone call from the Mayor of Newport, Councillor S. J. Pritchard, to Mrs Dombrowski of the Newport support group, resulted in her daughter, Christine, being invited to the Mayor's Parlour to receive a cheque for £200 presented by the Licensed Victuallers Ladies' Association. It would be nice to receive more mysterious telephone messages like this!

MRS Dorothy Cottle, chairman of the Cardiff group, organised a dance on behalf of the Regional Co-ordinating Committee of Wales, which was attended by over 350 people. It was a very happy occasion and brought together many members of the groups in the Cardiff area. The Kitty Slocombe school of dancing and the singing group 'Harmony,' gave their services free of charge for the cabaret.

CHILDREN in Wales are to the fore again. In Haverfordwest, Sarah Gau and June Bates dressed up during a Hallowe'en party, held a collection, and raised £6 for the Pembrokeshire Spastics Society. Sarah is the daughter of Mrs V. Gau, secretary to the Pembrokeshire group. In Cwmbran, Mrs Clarrie Williams, of the Monmouthshire Spastics Society, was presented with a cheque for £15 by Garry Soar and Deborah Saunders, both aged six. The money was collected at the Upper Cwmbran Infants School.

ROMILLY Road junior school, Barry, has approximately 400 children ranging in age from 5 to 11, and at their harvest festival they agreed that £26.50 should be donated to The Spastics Society to enable it to continue its work with children. I went to the school to receive the money from Katharine Trinder, representing the 9-11 age group and Helen Bryant of the 5-7 group.

THE Sports Council for Wales is holding a festival of movement and dance at the National Sports Centre, Cardiff, on December 11. Wheelchair dancing is included and teams in Wales may wish to compete. Tickets (adult 60p and students and children 35p) are available from the Council at the National Sports Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff.



GERRY McCann surrounded by his family, left to right, Thomas, Mandy, Mary and Philip, with the family pets.

Man of peace in a city of violence

Cont from Page 7

they just couldn't see beyond it. I could not get past clerk to senior clerk.' So Gerry started an Open University course getting his degree in 1973.

He was a runner-up in the 1974 Achievement Award run by The Spastics Society and after studying law has been accepted by the Law Society. He is the first government apprentice solicitor in Northern Ireland. Two years ago he was appointed a Justice of the Peace — the first severely disabled JP in the Province.

In May he'll sit his final law exams and intends to practise

law within the Civil Service, which will give those appointment boards pause for consideration, since he will have the rank equivalent to a deputy principal.

Now 48, he has survived his birth, hardship, prejudice and gunmen. He dismisses the time, two years ago, when he was held up, and had bricks through his window along with threats of being burned out. It was, he concedes, 'a very frightening experience,' but apart from that he says: 'I've had very little trouble — the people round me are very good.'

Christmas cookery



Christmas Log (serves 6-8)

For the cake:

- 3 large British eggs
- 3 oz caster sugar
- 2½ oz plain flour, sieved
- ½ oz cocoa, sieved
- 1 tablespoon warm water
- Caster sugar (for dusting)

For the filling and coating:

- 15 fl oz fresh double cream
- 1 rounded tablespoon cocoa
- 1-2 tablespoons very hot water
- 2 rounded tablespoons icing sugar (sieved)

Or

- 15 fl oz fresh double cream
- 1 tablespoon Strega or Kirsch.

Whisk the eggs and sugar until so thick that the whisk leaves a 'trail,' then fold in the flour and cocoa, followed by the warm water. Pour the mixture into a well-greased and lightly floured Swiss roll tin and bake at 400 deg F, Mark 6, for eight to 10 minutes until cooked. Turn the cake out quickly on to a piece of grease-proof paper dusted with caster sugar. When cool enough, trim the edges with a sharp knife. Make a slight crease about half inch along one short side and roll up carefully, keeping the paper inside. Leave the cake to get cold.

Dissolve the cocoa in just enough water to make it into a smooth thick paste, add to the cream, stir in the sieved icing sugar and whisk until thick. Gently unroll the cake and take off the paper. Spread one-third of the cream on the inside and roll up once more. Place the cake on a board and spread the rest of the cream over the top and sides, swirling the surface in a log-like pattern with a fork. Decorate as desired. Or add the liqueur to the cream, whip until stiff, and use in the same way as above.

This cake is easier to cut when slightly chilled, but is best eaten at room temperature.

THE GARWOOD HOTEL

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This new 16-bedded Hotel will be opening in mid-December to provide holidays and some short-stay accommodation for spastics.

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The Society can help with your holiday plans

THIS is the unseasonal time of the year when you must plan your next year's holiday — particularly if you are handicapped, or have a family with a handicapped member.

Wheelchair bound, you may be looking for a hotel with easy access and manoeuvrability once inside. As a family with a handicapped person, or an integrated party, a hotel where the management understands the needs of the disabled can set the mind at rest and be a contributing factor to a relaxed holiday. There are hotels catering for the more severely handicapped where personal care is provided and outings and evening entertainments are arranged. As parents of a handicapped child, you may need to know of a 'home from home' where you can leave him for a week or so, while you take the rest of the family on holiday.

The Central Council for the Disabled publishes an annual guide entitled 'Holidays for the Physically Handicapped,' which gives information on holidays available to the handicapped in Britain plus a section to assist the handicapped traveller on the Continent, with suitable places to stay as well as organisations in each country which are willing to help. The guide can be obtained direct from The Central Council for the Disabled, 34 Eccleston Square, London SW1V 1PE (tel: 01-821 1871) for £1.25 (inclusive pack-

age and postage) or from major branches of W. H. Smith and Son early in 1977.

If you would like some help in finding a suitable place to spend your 1977 summer holiday, you may telephone or write to Miss Merle Davies, The Spastic Society, Family Services and Assessment Centre, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ (tel: 01-387 9571). The following lists can be sent to you on request: Holiday facilities for the handicapped (sources of information); Holiday and short-term care facilities (personal help available); Holiday facilities (no personal help available); Holiday and short-term care facilities for handicapped children (mostly unaccompanied); Self catering facilities for handicapped people and their families.

Please get in touch soon, and do not be like the person who wrote a day before his holiday was due to begin!

Friends by pen or tape

DESMOND Baldwin, aged 22, from Yorkshire, would like a female pen or tape friend. His interests are all kinds of music and sport.

Mr Baldwin, who is blind and has a spastic disability in his legs, would like to correspond by cassette, reel-to-reel tape or letter. His address is 5 Little Lane, Moorthorpe, South Elmsall, near Pontefract, West Yorkshire.

News about the Spastics Pool

'Neighbourly' response

WHEN Spastics Pool collector Mr Samuel Snaith of Temple Park Road, South Shields, heard that the Oakleigh Gardens special school in Cleadon had launched an appeal for funds for a therapeutic swimming pool, he wrote to the Trustees of the Good Neighbours Trust asking for help.



MR B. White (left) receiving a cheque for £909.10 from Mr A. Catliff, Chairman of the Bridgwater and District Spastics Association at a group event at the Town Hall, Bridgwater. Mr White of Parkway, Bridgwater, Somerset, qualified for his prize on the first dividend of the Spastics Pool. Also pictured is Mrs White.

The Trustees responded with a £500 donation.

The swimming pool will benefit not only the pupils of Oakleigh Gardens school but also others in the South Tyneside area, including 500 spastic children.

Top Ten's Regional Manager for the North East, George Gray, organised a get-together for collectors and supporters at the Saltwell Road Club, Newcastle, on October 17 which was attended by Martin Handford and Tony Veater of the Company's Marketing Department. Next day, the two Company representatives presented the Good Neighbours Trust cheque for £500 to the Mayor of South Tyneside, Councillor Mrs Lilian Jordison, assisted by nine-year-old Lisa Gilmartin, a pupil at Oakleigh Gardens Special School.

Picture right: the Mayor, Lisa, and Martin Handford with that all important cheque.



MAYOR of Saffron Walden, Mr Stephen Neville handing over a first dividend cheque for £3,333.34 to Mr Bob Furze of Goldstone, Ashdon, at a meeting of the Ashdon and Saffron Walden District Young Farmers Club.

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Rates battle over 'unfair' charity shops

THE newspaper columns of a quiet Kentish market town reverberated when a council chief declared war on charity shops. Battle commenced when Swale District Council reviewed an application for full rate relief on two charity shops in the area. Under new laws,

such shops are automatically relieved of half the rate, and the rest can be set aside at the Council's discretion and this it was being asked to do.

But Swale District Council Chairman, Richard Barnicott, is himself a shop owner, and he said a growing number of charity shops were operating as permanent traders and undercut ordinary shops

because of their subsidised overheads.

Within a week Swale traders united to combat the charity shops and the war went on to the air when Councillor Barnicott and a charity shop manager gave their views on the local radio station, BBC Radio Medway.

Then The Spastics Society's Head of Marketing, John Tough, stepped into the firing line and delivered a neat salvo to dispose of the opposition's

objections. In a letter to the two local papers he pointed out that Councillor Barnicott was under some misapprehension in believing charity shops were selling new merchandise cheaply to undercut local shops.

'The majority of goods sold at our own Spastics Shops are donated. Most sales are in second-hand clothing which is snapped up by old age pensioners, mothers of large families, single parent families and others in lower income groups who simply could not afford to

pay current prices. Thus, charity shops provide an important community service for the less affluent.

'New goods help to bring a wider cross section of the public into our shops and, in the process, also help us dispose of other donated goods. But such new lines total only about 15 per cent of sales and incidentally include a fair proportion of products made by spastic people in our workshops; and who would deny severely handicapped people employment outlets? Councillor Barnicott's criticism of un-

fair trading also overlooks the fact that charities such as The Spastics Society subsidises both the ratepayer and the taxpayer by providing schools, residential centres, works centres, special care units and a variety of other establishments and services for severely handicapped people which relieves pressures on both central and local government.'

A truce has been declared on the original issue of rate relief while the council's chief financial officer produces a full report on the situation.

Next spring in Oxford

THE annual seminar organised by the International Cerebral Palsy Society will be held from March 28 to April 2, 1977, at University College, Oxford. Applications should be sent to Mrs Anita Loring, Seminar Director, International Cerebral Palsy Society, 5A Netherhall Gardens, London NW3. Theme of the seminar is 'The future of the handicapped in urban civilisation.' Further details in the next issue of Spastics News.

Right data

FOUR computer data processors from Kodak were programmed for success when they scored 159 points out of a possible 160 in a local knockout darts competition. Martin McCarthy, Annie Gray, John Lunn and Graham Dobb raised £124 by their precision for Middlesex Spastics Society.

Duke's walkers

A SPONSORED walk organised by Herefordshire's Duke of Edinburgh Award Committee raised £250, and among the charities to benefit was The Spastics Society.

Flying flowers

ORCHIDS from Singapore were among flowers raffled to raise money for the Society's Chiltern House fund recently.

Nice girls

CHARITIES including The Spastics Society are to benefit from the foot-slogging efforts of 170 schoolgirls from the Mater Dei Parkway School, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. The Sunday walk raised more than £1,000.



TRACY Hampson and Jon Pertwee, at the launching party.

Sports girl shines on world's TV

TRACY Hampson, a pupil of the Society's Thomas Delarue School in Kent, appears in 'Big Blue Marble,' the first worldwide television series to be made for children. Tracy, an accomplished athlete, was filmed by an American TV company at the International Spastics Games at the Crystal Palace in 1974, and since the film was made she has followed up

her London triumph by winning a Gold Medal for the light shot in this year's International Games in France.

'Big Blue Marble,' aimed at helping children develop a sense of international community, shows how youngsters live and play throughout the world. Scenes have been shot on location in most countries, including Russia. The title is a quote from an American astronaut who said that from a spacecraft the world looked 'just like a big blue marble.'

The series, which has won two major TV awards in America, includes an international pen-pal scheme, designed to foster friendship between children from many different cultural backgrounds.

The first series of 'Big Blue Marble' has already been shown on some British ITV stations, and a second series was given a Press preview in November at the Royal Lancaster Hotel in London. Tracy, on half-term holiday from Delarue, travelled up from Lymm in Cheshire for the occasion with her parents and two younger sisters. It made an exciting advance celebration for her 15th birthday, five days later. At the preview she met Jon Pertwee, a former 'Dr Who,' and he presented her with a stamp album and catalogue, for she is interested in philately as well as sport.

Christmas greetings from the Director

MR James Loring and his wife Anita wish all their friends throughout the Society and its local groups, a very happy Christmas,

'Curtain up' on secret production

GUESTS at a Christmas party held at the Midland Spastic Association's day centre in Birmingham will be entertained by a play written specially for the occasion by Bernard Bate, a general helper at the centre.

Mr Bate, who last year achieved fame as the first spastic to serve on the MSA Council since it was formed in 1947, had his first play, 'Fashion School,' performed by staff at the 1972 Christmas party. This was followed in 1973 and 1974 by 'The Vicar and the missing diamonds,' in two parts. The subject of the latest play is being kept a secret until the night of the performance.

Green stamps buy new wheelchair

SUSAN Howard, aged 25, and a member of Calderdale Spastics Society, Halifax, has an electric wheelchair, thanks to those little green trading stamps. For a dozen staff at the Green Shield Gift House, with the help of customers, have been saving stamps over the last six months. They reached their target and Susan got her chair.

Flags for fittings

A FLAG day held by Coventry and District Spastics Society brought in £679. This will go towards furniture and adapted fittings for the group's seaside holiday bungalow.

Have you got your cards yet?



THE Mayor of Grimsby, Councillor Peter Ellis made a bee-line for the Christmas card and calendar stall after he had opened South Humberside Spastics Society's annual fair. With him (left to right) are Mr Christopher Moore, the group's Vice-Chairman, and Councillor Matt Quinn, President. Salespeople are Mrs Ida Norton and Mr Charles Rowbotham.

Picture by courtesy of Grimsby Evening Telegraph.

Hurry... closing date nears for Award

WHO will be the winner of this year's special Achievement Award for spastics? £250 and a silver cup are waiting for the spastic man or woman, or young person over the age of 12 who, in the opinion of a judging panel, has made the most outstanding achievement or sustained effort in very difficult circumstances.

Members of the panel include Lord Crawshaw, who is himself disabled, and Corbet Woodall, TV newsreader, who now presents the BBC TV programme 'Contact.' Further names will be announced next month.

All concerned in any way with helping spastic people constantly hear of the tremendous efforts being made by so many to break through their own special barriers, and the outstanding results they achieve. But there are many more whose sustained efforts in very difficult circumstances could well

qualify them for consideration for the Award, and we would like to hear about them.

They cannot nominate themselves, so it is up to you to give them their chance. Send their name, address and as much information as possible to Mrs Nina Heycock, 27-33 Harrington Gardens, South Kensington, London SW7. Closing date for entries is Monday, January 3, 1977. You can nominate as many candidates as you wish; there are medals and prizes for the runners-up, and a celebration lunch in London early in March for the finalists.

Don't be put off if your prospective nominees have not achieved any great scholastic honours, or climbed a mountain — managing to get their first job after repeated refusals, or years of trying against all the odds can count just as much — it is the effort and perseverance that matter.

Spastics in Ulster

Cont from Page 1

could not keep up with the cost of replacing the tyres ripped up.

Ironically the physically handicapped are better off than the mentally handicapped. One spastic explained: 'I don't believe people realise how bad a Civil War could be—unfortunately the scum is at the top on both sides and in control. Compassion goes—many mentally retarded people have been shot dead.'

It is a fact that the large double decker buses which transport the educationally subnormal to school run into a lot more trouble than the single deckers used by the two physically handicapped schools. But then the only schools in the entire Province for the physically disabled, Mitchell House School and

Fleming Fulton School are the only schools which are not segregated by religion. All the other schools from grammar down to those for the educationally subnormal are segregated—although one or two of the grammar schools are trying to integrate.

Apart from the bombs and the bullets though, there are the same problems facing parents of disabled children in Antrim as much as Aberdeen, Belfast as in Birmingham. Lack of access, lack of knowledge, where to turn and what to do, echoes of uncomprehending bureaucracy. One mother took her child to the doctor who glanced at the medical history with the initials CP indicating Cerebral Palsy, and said: 'I see your child has had Chicken Pox.'

There is a new poster on

the hoardings in Belfast—in black and white it depicts a wall with the chalked message: '7 years is enough—OK?' When you're born disabled there can be no limit on your battle for independence, but in the Province's two schools for the physically handicapped it is the only battle being fought, where sectarianism is forgotten, where the spastic child of a British Army soldier is just another pupil.

Said the Headmaster of Mitchell House School: 'The "Troubles" do not spill over into the school—we're absolutely integrated—and what's more, so are the parents—they all mix wonderfully well.'